From: Simmons, Denise
To: Judith Phillips
Subject: Re: BDS Resolution
Date: Wednesday, April 18, 2018 4:56:32 PM

Dear Ms. Phillips,

Thank you for your email. So far, I have not yet seen an actual draft of the proposed resolution asking the City to cease purchasing HP equipment and supplies. I understand there's been a great deal of concern in the community about this matter – yet I must underscore that this will only appear on the City Council's April 23 agenda if one or more City Councilors sponsor it. We will not know if it is on the agenda until either a City Councilor publicly declares that they'll be sponsoring this (to my knowledge, this has not happened), or until the agenda is finalized by the Clerk's Office and posted online this Thursday evening around 5:30 pm (indeed, the latest I'm hearing is that the organization looking to have this sponsored may be recalculating as to when they think this can be introduced). I can, at the very least, confirm that *I* am not a sponsor of such a resolution.

There have been numerous passionate op-eds, emails, and social media posts condemning the City Council for rushing this to a vote without adequate opportunities for the public to weigh in, or even giving people a chance to read the resolution. Some people have condemned the City Council for seemingly being on the brink of passing this resolution, or for seemingly being on the brink of rejecting it. Neither scenario is accurate. While I understand the passion behind this matter, I must clarify that we do not yet actually have a resolution or policy order in front of us, there has been absolutely no debate about this amongst the City Councilors, and the City Council will not have an opportunity to take this up for consideration unless and until a resolution is sponsored by at least one of us and introduced at a public meeting. At this point, I am not yet certain if such a resolution will be introduced or not.

I appreciate your reaching out and sharing your views on this. I am currently reading up on this issue to be better informed, I am reviewing all the emails and letters coming in about this issue, and I am reaching out to our representatives in Congress to seek their input on an issue that is more international than municipal in scope. Should this matter end up on before the City Council – either on April 23 or at a later date – I will look forward to engaging in a thoughtful discussion and debate with my colleagues on the Council and then seeing how to best resolve this matter in a way that allows everyone to feel they have had a fair chance to be heard. Thank you.

E. Denise Simmons

From: Judith Phillips <judith.phillips@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 18, 2018 4:36 PM
To: City Council
Subject: BDS Resolution

Dear members of the Cambridge City Council:

I wanted to write to thank you for all of the ways that you make me incredibly proud to be a Cantabrigian. From the big initiatives, like the Community Electricity Program, citywide composting and participatory budgeting, to the smaller ones, like rainbow crosswalks on Mass Ave. for Pride Day. I have been struck on many occasions by how responsive you are to citizens of Cambridge who surface questions or concerns to you.

I hope that today is no exception. For the first time, I do not feel proud to be a Cantabrigian. I feel singled out, villainized, victimized and profoundly disappointed. I cannot address the specifics of a resolution that has not yet been made available for review. As a general matter, however, the resolution against HP and the BDS movement strike me as everything that I thought Cambridge was not. They stifle free and honest debate, single out a minority group for reproach, and do nothing to move the needle on a very complicated problem.

Even if you agree with the sentiment behind the BDS movement, where does it stop? 3M creates devices that are used in prisons in Israel. Will the Cambridge public schools be prohibited from buying Scotch tape? Should they be? Waze was founded in Israel. Should you pass a resolution to encourage Cantabrigians to stop using it for navigation? What about Google, which bought Waze and has an R&D center in Israel? We couldn't even use Bing as an alternative, since Microsoft has an R&D center there as well. Should we avoid generic drugs so as not to contribute to the bottom line of Teva Pharmaceuticals?

Even if you agree with the sentiment behind the BDS movement, will this resolution achieve your objectives? Israel takes the actions that it does to provide for the security of its citizens. Do you think that singling it out for reproach, and seeking to isolate it, will cause it to feel more secure or less secure? If the latter, do you think that you'll be furthering your aims by passing this resolution?

This resolution comes on the heels of Holocaust Remembrance Day. It comes on the heels of a scary survey in which 31% of respondents aged 18 to 34 responded that only 2 million Jews perished in the Holocaust (https://www.haaretz.com/us-news/1.5994426). The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an incredibly complex and nuanced problem. Anti-Semitism is a hard and entrenched problem as well. BDS is blunt and entirely unnuanced. Please do not try to address such a complex situation with such a blunt, ill thought-out measure. Please do not give fodder to those who fan the flames or anti-Semitism.

I thank those of you have indicated that you will vote against this misguided and shortsighted resolution. I urge those of you who are considering support for it to reconsider.

Kindest regards,

Judith Dolgin

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Judith Phillips Dolgin
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